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Subject: Culcairn Solar talk today plus additional comments Jennifer Jacob
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Dear Commissioners

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today.

I wish to email most of my presentation with additional comments.

I have spoken against the Walla Walla, Jindera and now Culcairn solar projects. It is extremely frustrating that the Department and IPCN Commissioners are not listening to the serious concerns of many people. Many requests have been made for these three projects to be a face to face public meeting to really understand what is happening. A few people speaking via zoom/phone and emails doesn't give justice. You need to be here. A look at the site with the people leasing land and a few minutes with one neighbour is not good enough.

I was absolutely shocked that both Walla Walla and Jindera were given approval (To inform about Jindera by email on December 22nd afternoon, was disgraceful!) The Department says because the DPI Mapping project to identify Important Agricultural

Land

hasn't been finalized, it's not directly applicable to the projects. This is exactly what each solar company says too. **HOW CAN THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMEND A PROJECT BASED ON FALSE LAND MAPPING?** Many in our area sent in detailed submissions two years ago as it was so wrong! Greater Hume Council found out for their submissions for the four projects, that this land will be mapped as Important Agricultural Land. Why don't the Department and solar companies find out as well, instead of using false land classifications. Why do the results of the DPI Mapping project keep being delayed? Billabong Farmers Branch of NSW Farmers said the data which Neoen had assessed agriculture capability in the EIS was incorrect.

Walla Walla and Jindera being approved as State Significant Projects has let smaller Companies come in and have been going around to farms near the transmission line wanting to lease farms for projects less than \$30 million. They only need Council approval and then go to Court if refused. This has already happened at Bomen. Now there are worried farmers as some neighbours are looking to accept these offers. More agricultural land lost!! Greater Hume will look like an industrial waste! **THE Government should NEVER have let foreign owned companies into areas where there is agricultural land.**

The Government are more concerned with meeting energy targets than agriculture. Mr Hussey from the Institute of Public Affairs said on February 24th that China is responsible for 63.6% of the increase in global carbon emissions since 2004, while Australia is responsible for 0.35% of the increase. China is currently constructing 92 coal fired stations with a further 135 in pre-construction phase. Australia has none. Yet we export our good quality coal. What do China do with it? China isn't in the Paris Climate Agreement, yet in Australia meeting the net zero carbon emissions target would put 653,600 jobs at risk in agriculture, heavy manufacturing and coal mining. This is disastrous for Australia.

Is large scale solar needed? Roof top solar is on 25% of homes. At least the owner gets a reduction in his electricity bill. Only one or two families who lease land in large scale solar for top money get a benefit. No lower electricity for locals. I am sure with the advances in technology other means are available to take over from large scale solar. It is expensive to set up and takes up so much land, especially good agricultural land.

All solar panels and associated hazardous equipment comes from overseas, mainly China. There is no recycling for panels, just one company in SA. At Culcairn alone 900,000 panels. This is bad planning with the push for large scale solar. When the panels go to landfill, they contain toxic materials eg lead which can leach out. What happens if a panel cracks in a storm?

water and soil contamination,
is very real, with 16 dams, and 3 watercourses. BackCreek runs into the large Billabong Creek,
largest creek in NSW. A real concern!

The way the environment is devastated is so wrong. How do the solar companies get away
with it? All they do is pay Biodiversity credits. If farmers destroyed trees like that, we would
be in trouble. The whole ecosystem is upset. With Walla Solar only 1 km away, the environment
concerns are magnified.

Decommissioning is very vague. It says, `unless otherwise agreed by the Planning Secretary` for many decisions.
Who pays for it? What if the Company goes broke? We are in a worldwide economic mess
and pandemic. Very risky! To say the soil will be put back to its original state is just not true. Would be contaminated.

The whole process needs to be revised. It will be three years next month that neighbours first found out.
The foreign companies have already struck deals with people leasing land. The neighbours have no idea when first
told, how big and impacting the project will be. Their whole futures and well being are uncertain.
Very stressful! Despite the Department saying they have no clear evidence, land values are effected. Recently, land
for sale near Glenellen Solar showed a lot of interest until told of the solar project. There wasn't a bid at auction.
Very unfair for landowners who have worked hard all their lives and are now left with nothing.
They can't sell and they don't wish to live near it. Just disgraceful! Some landowners are caught in
the middle of both Walla and Culcairn projects! Yet a farm only a few kms away sold for \$1.8mill
only 98.34 hectares, just a few weeks ago.

The \$5 million VPA with Greater Hume Council and the \$4.8 million community benefit fund
from Neoen doesn't sit well with me. There is enough division already in our area. This
money will only add to it. I don't want to see any projects used in Walla with dirty money.
When a company has to offer that amount of money to gain support, alarm bells start ringing.
If the project is so good for our area, money would not need to be offered. The project
would speak for itself! Money takes the focus off the concerning issues and real
impacts involved. We are used to working together in our community to get what's
needed. Recently, we applied to Riverina Water and got money to paint the water tower
and exercise equipment. We were all excited about that!

In closing, I URGE there to be a STOP and REVIEW done of all large scale solar.
Including the Walla and Jindera projects. We have the best agricultural land here.
We need agriculture to feed our growing population. NO MORE LARGE SCALE
SOLAR ON AGRICULTURE LAND. LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE HERE!!

Jennifer Jacob

